

Walton Ford

A Very Rare Sight

46 & 57 rue du Temple, 75004, Paris

22 April – 3 June 2023

Opening: Saturday, 22 April, 6 – 8 pm

Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris, is pleased to announce *A Very Rare Sight*, a solo exhibition of recent works by **Walton Ford**. The paintings merge historical references with mass culture codes, drawing from literature, allegory and cinema. Most of the watercolours in the exhibition are accompanied by a drawing and a study, revealing Ford's technical prowess as both a painter and draughtsman. Generally, a piece of text or minutiae sparks a curiosity that inspires Ford's original compositions. Sometimes he conceives of an image for a painting after reading a single sentence. If there is something that resonates, or offers an opportunity for further enquiry into how humans look at animals (now, and throughout literary history) — there is a painting. The interpretation develops after the imagery is painted.

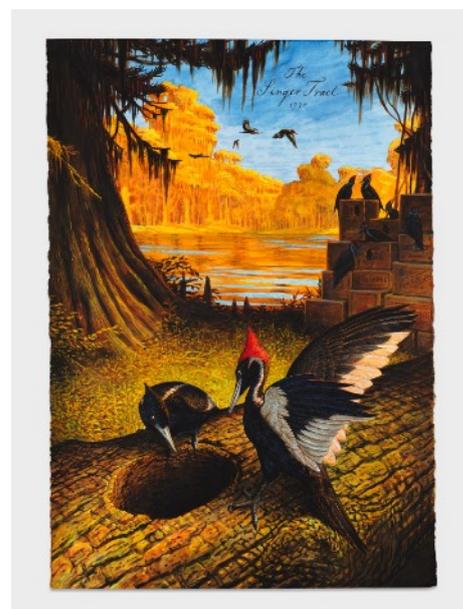
Halve Maen, 2022, set in 1609, depicts the moment when explorer Henry Hudson first entered New York Harbor in his ship, the Half Moon. In the sky above, a group of peregrine falcons collide at high speed. Ford envisages a prophetic scene, the implosion referring to the speed and greed of the emerging city.

In 1937, the Singer sewing machine company sold the logging rights in an enormous tract of Louisiana forest. The land held the last breeding population of ivory-billed woodpeckers, and was quickly reduced to a wasteland of baked mud, resulting in the species' extinction. *The Singer Tract*, 2023, shows the birds looking into their former nest hole in a newly felled tree.

Ford imagined that the flying monkeys in *The Wizard of Oz* were actual animals that had evolved, perhaps in Western Africa. In his painting, *The Original Nikko*, 2023, a fictional narrative is inscribed at the bottom, imagining Nikko as one such monkey that had been kept by Louis B. Mayer.

How many foxes are there in England?, 2022, visualises a passage from Virginia Woolf's diary. As in the Renaissance, Ford makes a single composition that explores a timeline; in this case, an entire day in Woolf's life. Depicting both foggy and bright weather, the painting overturns clichés about mental illness where rain represents negativity and sun represents hope or improvement. The title of the exhibition also draws from Woolf's diary entry.

Awakening, 2023, refers to an episode in the *Panchatantra* entitled 'The Lion Makers', in which scholars encounter a lion skeleton in the forest and endeavour to bring the animal back to life.



Walton Ford, *The Singer Tract*, 2023
Photo: Tom Powel Imaging

Mir Samir, 2022, was inspired by a brief passage in Eric Newby's memoir, *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush*. Newby recorded a local Afghan folktale where an ibex retreated from the great flood and climbed to the top of the mountain. As the floods drowned the earth, the water level rose to cover just the underside of the ibex's belly.

Walton Ford was born in 1960 in Westchester County and lives and works in New York. Solo exhibitions of his work have been held in international institutions, including the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris (2015); Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; Albertina, Vienna (both 2010); Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek (2010–2011); Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach; San Antonio Museum of Art (both 2007); Brooklyn Museum, New York (2006); New Britain Museum of American Art (2004); Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick (2000); University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach (1999); Aspen Art Museum (1998); Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem (1997); The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; and Virginia Beach Center for The Arts, Virginia Beach (both 1993). Ford's work is in the collections of the Albertina Museum, Vienna; Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; New Britain Museum of American Art; Princeton Art Museum; The Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford; and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others.

[Further exhibitions and events](#)

Berlin:

17 March – 30 April 2023

Katharina Grosse

Spectrum without Traces

Potsdamer Straße 77–87, 10785

17 March – 30 April 2023

Katharina Grosse

Untitled, 2023

Window Gallery, Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

27 April – 10 June 2023

**Merlin Carpenter, Jutta Koether, Valentina Liernur,
Kerry James Marshall, Albert Oehlen, Adam Pendleton,
Avery Singer, SoIL Thornton, Rosemarie Trockel
Soundtrack: Jens-Uwe Beyer**

*In Defense of Symbolic Value: Artistic Procedures
in the Resort*

Curated by Isabelle Graw

Bleibtreustraße 45 and 15/16, 10623

27 April – 10 June 2023

Raphaela Simon

Nighthawks

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

London:

25 April – 27 May 2023

**Ida Ekblad, Günther Förg, Joan Mitchell, Albert Oehlen,
Rebecca Warren**

Surface Works

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS

Marfa:

4 May – 10 December 2023

Grace Weaver

Indoor Paintings

1976 Antelope Hills Road, TX 79843

Press Contact

Galerie Max Hetzler

Victoria Mirzayantz

victoria.mirzayantz@maxhetzler.com

Paris: +33 1 57 40 60 81

www.facebook.com/galeriemaxhetzler

www.instagram.com/galeriemaxhetzler

Sign up for our Newsletter

